Central American NEWSLETTER

Newsletter of the Central American Group of the Spanish Main Society.
Editor: Bernard Davies, 16, Lynwood Close, Gordon Road, South Woodford, London E18 1DP 01-504-5042

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EDITORIAL

We have pleasure in sending you the second issue of the Central American Newsletter. The group is well under way. This Newsletter contains some of the answers to most of the questions posed in our first issue Causerie. Three mini-packets of Nicaragua and one of Salvador have completed their circuits. We have material for two more Nicaragua, one mixed Central America, and possibly one Salvador. Thereafter, for our mini-packets and private treaty offers to continue we depend on YOU. Furthermore we need the 10% commission to defray postage and printing costs. Even with this financial help, the time is approaching when we may need to accept members' offers of a subscription to defray these costs.

The Editor asks if you would be kind enough to forgive him if he is occasionally somewhat dilatory in answering correspondence. Following a mild heart attack, last Easter, he has been instructed not to overdo things, and his current job sometimes involves considerable pressure. He hopes you will be understanding, at least until he retires.

An account of our inaugural meeting on September 20th will be found in "Mainsheet". Held at the Victory Services Club from 10.30a.m. until 4p.m., the meeting included displays by George Richardson, Brian Moorhouse, Anthony Wilkinson and Bernard Davies, and was supported by a bourse run by George Richardson. The middle of the day was given over to a meeting discussing the role of the Group in the Spanish Main's organisation. It was agreed to encourage the formation of other similar groups: one for Chile, Peru and Bolivia may be born by January 1981. Members felt that our efforts were to be commended, and a general willingness to aid our efforts financially was expressed. It was considered desirable to include Costa Rica and Guatemala, as well as Honduras, Salvador and Nicaragua. As our greatest strength is in Nicaragua, for which most of our members are to be found in the Midlands and the North, it is hoped that our second meeting may be arranged for a venue in Manchester (venue awaiting confirmation for March 14th 1981 - Sec.), probably on a Saturday in March. Further information will follow as soon as we have firm arrangements.

PLEASE REMEMBER to address your letters to;

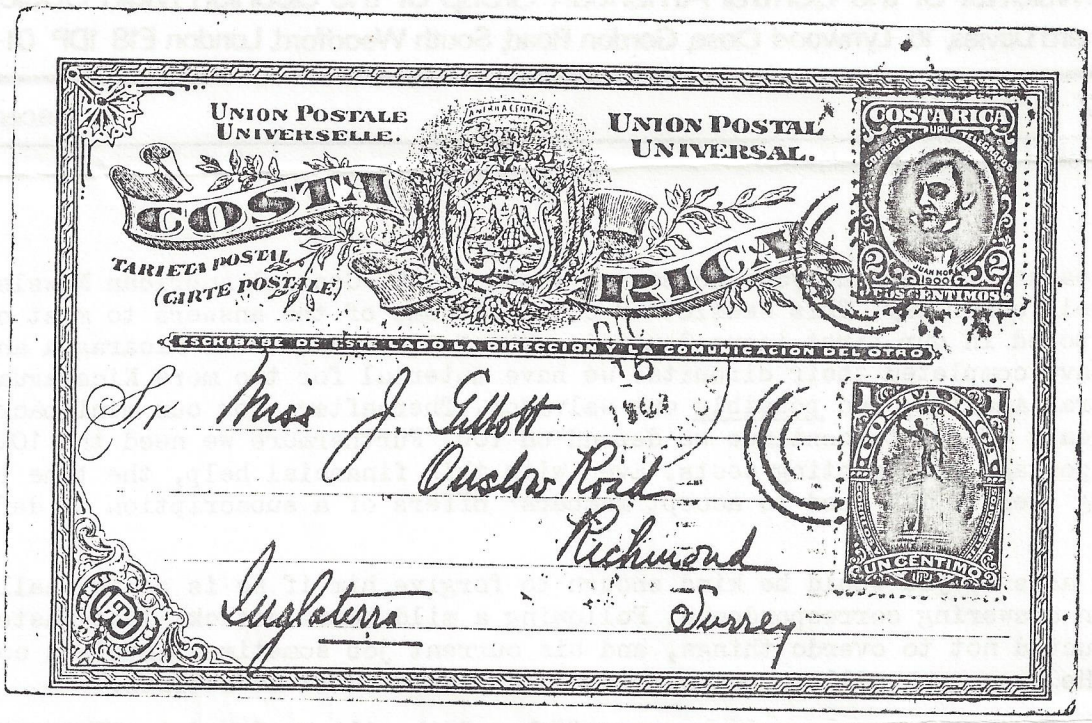
Bernard Davies,
16, Lynwood Close,
Gordon Road,
SOUTH WOODFORD
London E18 1DP or phone 01-504-5042

Bernard Davies

Bernard Davies
Editor of the Central American Newsletter
Secretary of the Spanish Main Society

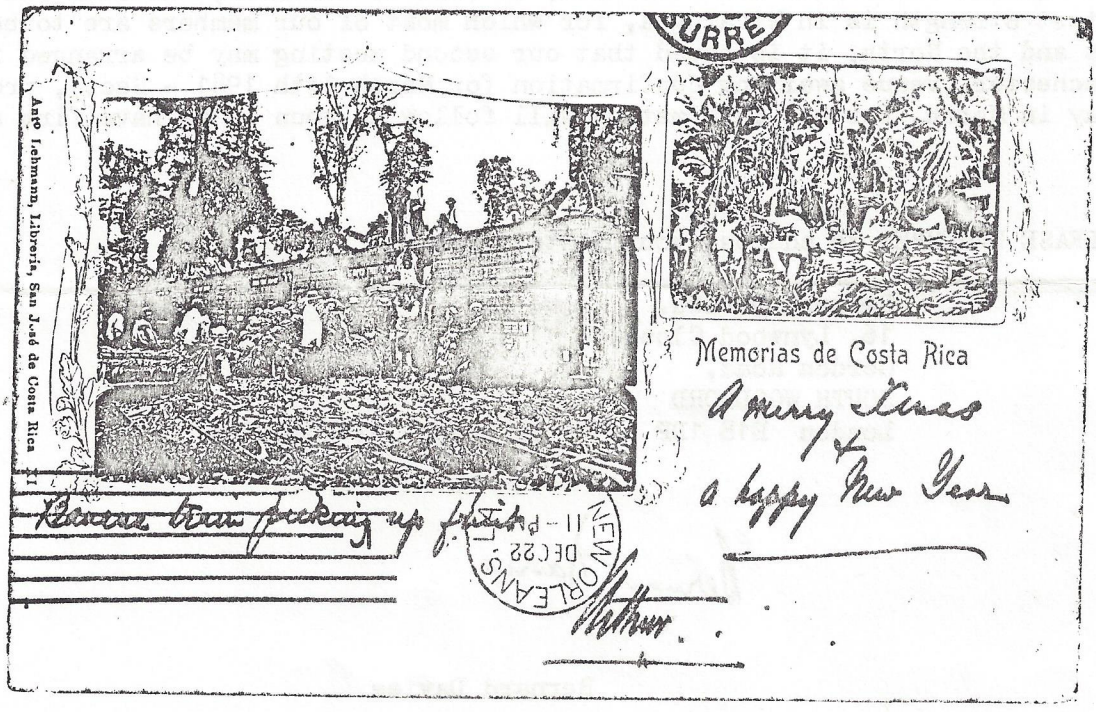
COSTA RICA: POSTAL STATIONERY by N.F.Brewin

Recently, in a small lot of covers and postal stationery, one item immediately attracted my attention. It was the 2 centavos green on buff postal card of 1890 (Higgins & Gage No 3). Over the position of the printed 2c stamp is the 1901 2c adhesive (SG 43), and below this is the 1901 1c adhesive (SG 42) to pay the rate to England.



The stamps are cancelled with 4 ring target cancels in black, alongside a faint single ring San Jose - Costa Rica cancellation in light blue, dated December 15th 1902.

On the reverse are two pictures. The larger one shows bananas being loaded onto a train, whilst the smaller picture shows a banana plantation. Below the smaller picture are the words "Memorias de Costa Rica". The imprint along the side of the card's reverse is 'Antº Lehmann, Libreria, San Jose de Costa Rica XI'



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In the Saenz catalogue it states that the 1892 issue of stamps were demonetized on March 1st 1901, and it is reasonable to assume that the earlier postal stationery was treated likewise.

This now raises various queries;

1 Was the postal stationery demonetized and the remainders sold to the highest bidder, or were the new 2 centimos adhesives stuck to the cards so that they retained their postal validity?

2 Were the pictures printed on the reverse of the card officially, or was it a private enterprise?

3 Was this banana picture the only one, or is there a series showing different aspects of Costa Rica?

If you have any comments to make, please send them to Bernard Davies.

PRIVATE TREATY OFFERS - EL SALVADOR

S30 to S43 are mint sets, unmounted mint or very lightly mounted mint.

S30.	SG750-69 Waterlow definitives, set of 10	£ 2.50
S31.	SG1154-63 Revolution anniversary 1961	£ 1.00
S32.	SG1180-93 Fauna set of 14	£ 1.25
S33.	SG1204-15 Flora set of 12	£ 1.40
S34.	SG1198-1207 with two MS. Kennedy	£ 1.50
S35.	SG1281-88 Butterflies set of 8	£ 4.50
S36.	SG1289-94 Red Cross set of 6	£ 2.00
S37.	SG1299-1304 Hospitals set of 6	£ 2.75
S38.	SG1307-12 Tourism set of 6	£ 0.80
S39.	SG1323-27 Army Day set of 5	£ 0.50
S40.	SG1313-18 Insects set of 4	£ 3.00
S41.	SG1319-22 Human Rights set of 4	£ 0.50
S42.	SG1346-49 International Education Year set of 4	£ 1.25
S43.	SG1328-43 World Cup Football set of 16	£ 6.00
S44.	SG1-4 First Issue set of 4 unused	£ 3.50
S45.	SG5 Probably Type II unused	£ 2.00
S46.	SG6 Probably Type II used	£ 2.00
S47.	SG6 Probably Type III unused	£ 1.00
S48.	SG7 Probably Type II used	£ 2.00
S49.	SG7 Probably Type III used	£ 1.00
S50.	SG8 Probably Type II used	£ 5.00
S51.	SG13 Mint, full gum	£ 7.00
S52.	SG20 Mint, full gum	£ 2.50
S53.	SG770-74 Airs first print mint set of 5	£ 5.00
S54.	SG783-86 Bolivar airs mint set of 4	£ 7.50
S55.	SG908-9 Rowland Hill airs, pair mint	£10.00

Orders for material from this list should be sent to Bernard Davies, whose address is on the front page. Assuming that the items are still available, they will be sent to you together with an invoice including postage, and this should be paid by RETURN.

HONDURAS: HABILITADO - Richard A.Washburn

I submit my comments regarding Richard Wheatley's definition of the word 'Habilitado', and the frequent use of this term by the postal authorities of Honduras to either validate, revalidate, or qualify either a current or demonetized issue of stamps for a different use or value than originally intended.

The question asked - why overprint 'Habilitado' on some of the Queen Isabella stamps (originally issued as official airmails on October 12th 1952) in mid-December 1953?

This issue, commemorating the 500th anniversary of the birth of Isabella La Católica, was released on October 12th 1952, (Dia de la Raza) as both a regular and official airmail series, same design, different colours. The officials were supposedly for government mail use, but as all official interior mail had the free franking privelege, only rarely did a government office legitimately use an official stamp for international mail. More than likely, it would be any stamps that happened to be at hand.

During late 1952 and 1953, most of the more commonly used values of both the regular and official airmails were used for postage by the public.

When the Christmas mail rush started in late 1953, the postal authorities found themselves short of the more common 10,12,15,20,24,30,35 and 50 cent values. There were, however, sufficient quantities of the 2 and 8 cent official airs in the Treasury offices, so these were surcharged with the needed values and overprinted 'Habilitado', in this case indicating that the 'Official' overprint was no longer valid (Not that it ever really was). The same applies to the 1,2 and 5 lempira values that were also overprinted 'Habilitado', but not surcharged.

Honduras has done this many times before. In some cases the word 'Oficial' has been blocked out by a solid bar overprint. This was not done in 1953, probably because of esthetic reasons. If we go back to August of 1918, we find the 5 centavo official 'Ulua Bridge' stamp overprinted 'Corriente' meaning 'regular' mail, and the overprint 'Oficial' was blocked out by a bar. The word Habilitado was not used.

In early 1922, the 1919 issue was still in use. Postal rates changed and there was a shortage of six cent stamps. The overprint Habilitado was not used, rather the surcharge on the 2 cent reds was 'Vale Seis Cts.'. On the ten and fifty cent, and on the 1 peso surcharges of 1923, the word Habilitado was added to indicate, I suppose, that this Morazan Statue issue was validated for usage beyond the then normal three year period. All somewhat arbitary to say the least.

In 1926, a variety of Habilitado overprints appeared, some with, and some without surcharges, revalidating in this instance demonetized issues for continued use. A way to use up surplus stamps that otherwise would be a total loss.

Another usage in 1930, was the overprint 'Habilitado para Servicio Publico', on some surplus official stamps validating them for public use.

A bit ramble scramble this paper, perhaps it should be habilitated, but if someone does not write in once in a while there would not be any Newsletter or Mainsheet to read, and this no one would want. Saludos from a Honduras collector in Costa Rica.

WANTS LIST

From time to time, as space permits, we will publish readers wants. Offers to fill these wants should be sent c/o Bernard Davies. Please write on the envelope the name of the person submitting the want. Commission rate - 10% of price paid, payable by purchaser.

Richard Wheatley	Honduras	SG123 20c ultramarine overprinted ULTRAMAR in purple
		SG127 Medina 1c green mint
Mike Birks	Nicaragua	SG244 20c lake mint
		SG0153 20c brown mint
		SG0157 5p black mint

Private treaty offers always wanted. Commission rate 10%.

Replies to Questions Posed in the Previous Causerie

1. SG396 2c double surcharge VALE/un centavo/de cordoba. Mr C.R.Maxwell of Newport Beach, California, points out that Yvert catalogue this stamp as 397A (although they list inverted surcharge, not double surcharge - Ed.) In his articles in "The New York Philatelic Society Bulletin" in the 1920's, J.L.Stroub referred to this surcharge as 'bogus', printed on cancelled stamps which had done postal service.(There is also a rubber-stamped imitation (or 'forgery') of the SG440 surcharge - Ed.)

2. Mr Maxwell reports having 0703-4-5 and 0710-11 with signatures mint. The original question referred to SG626 (50c green Cathedral of 1931) overprinted OFICIAL in black, with Deshon/Sevilla signatures. We can offer no firm answer to this one; a lot of stamps exist with or without signatures in this period, where the 1931 earthquake added chaos to existing confusion.

3. Mr Maxwell tells us that Yvert after No.67 notes these exist, but he has never seen any. I can only repeat the remark in 2 above.

4. No-one has written in about the Joy Joaul signature on SG629. In fact, the Editor has this signature on the 2c bright carmine with Resello 1935 overprint SG817, and it is probably Jos. NOT Joy. Following an enormous theft of stamps, mainly from Campo del Marte, emergency measures were taken to invalidate the thieves' haul. These included the VALIDO overprint, the Resello 1935 overprint, and eventually the Resello - 1935 fancy boxed overprint (SG types 139a and 139b). Postmasters were also advised to sign stamps or use facsimile rubber stamps of names; I have fifteen different signatures in ink or rubber-stamp on SG816 and 817; and doubtless there are many more.

5. Mr Maxwell again kindly reminds us that 'these are listed as Yvert 187-9. They have been noted in the older Scott catalogues as private surcharges'. (Leavey's article in "Gibbons Stamp Weekly" of October 30th 1909, describes them as 'not authorised by any decree'. I tend to side with Dr Pocock; at least this seems a government rather than a clandestine printing, and the cancels found on the stamps are genuine enough, even if c.t.o., which makes them at least as real as anything emanating nowadays from Norfolk or Pitcairn Islands, for example - Ed.)

6. Mr Kilian Nathan says the (a) imprint occurs on P.S.reprints.

7. Mr Maxwell states that he has found these four values of 1925 Oficial overprint only on type B as Dr Pocock suggested, and this is further confirmed by Mike Birks of Manchester. Mr Maxwell thinks type A on these values to be fairly rare. Mr Nathan refers us to the note after Scott 0282. This note says; 'There are two types of the overprint on Nos.0271-0282' (SG0500-511).

13. The answer appears to be that in the first run through the presses type had been too firmly hammered down, so that only one letter or so in the whole sheet printed. It was then run through again, with the type correctly adjusted, producing a double overprint on the one stamp where the letter had printed in the first run. Mr Moorhouse confirms this as the answer.

16. Mr Nathan says the original purpose of the rail coupons was a tax on the freight bill; similar taxes existed in Switzerland, Belgium etc..

17. Mr Nathan suggests that SG0688-692 with Deshon/Sevilla signatures appeared in 1933 by which time the 25 cent value was probably sold out.

18. Mr Nathan regards SG533-5 with overprint in red as a genuine but unlisted variety; he has these stamps on cover

CAUSERIES - NEW QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

20. Mr Brian Moorhouse enquires about the PERMITASE handstamp;-

HONDURAS - the use of the PERMITASE hand stamp during the Locomotive issue.

In order to attempt to establish with some accuracy, the dates of usage of this hand-stamp in Amapala and the exact circumstances surrounding its use, I am compiling a 'cover log' of items that have originated from Amapala during the currency of the Locomotive stamps (1st August 1898 - 31st December 1902). I will start (on the next page) with a short list of five covers I have in my collection bearing these stamps;-

1.	9th October 1898	3 x 5c	
2.	7th January 1899	2 x 5c	(the cover also has 5 x 1c, 5 x 2c and 2 x 10c without the handstamp)
3.	30th April 1899	1 x 5c	
		1 x 10c	
4.	20th July 1899	1 x 2c	(this cover originates from Tegucigalpa and the 2c has been illegaly re-used)
5.	11th Sept. 1899	2 x 1c	
		3 x 2c	
		1 x 5c	
		1 x 6c	
		1 x 20c	

Next follows a list of covers I have from Amapala which do not have PERMITASE stamps.

6.	14th March 1900	5c + 10c	
7.	15th April 1900	10 x 1c + 5c	
8.	5th August 1900	5c + 10c	
9.	24th Dec. 1900	5 x 6c	
10.	28th Dec. 1900	3 x 5c	
11.	9th June 1901	5c + 10c	
12.	19th Oct. 1901	3 x 5c	
13.	9th Dec. 1901	1c + 2c	
14.	28th Dec. 1902	5c + 10c	(both values on laid paper)

A clear pattern is already emerging: All covers up to 11th September 1899 have some or all PERMITASE stamps. The handstamp was in use as early as 9th October 1898. From 14th March 1900 the PERMITASE stamps have disappeared. Several questions now must be asked.

What of the period between 11th September 1899 and 14th March 1900? When exactly did the PERMITASE stamps cease being sold?

The stated reason for the use of this handstamp on this issue, is that the Post Office was looted and subsequently closed. During its closure stamps were available via the Telegraph office and that these were handstamped prior to sale to help differentiate between legally obtained stamps and those looted from the Post Office. Are these the facts? If so, on what date was the Post Office looted and on what date was it closed? Naturally, when did it re-open? Also if the handstamp was used as a medium to invalidate looted stamps, why were 'mixed frankings' (with and without PERMITASE) allowed (my cover No.2)? Also, if the Post Office was closed how was registered mail handled? It is known that Postal Agencies did not have the authority to handle registered mail and yet my covers Nos 2 and 5 are both registered.

A lot of questions, of which I expect very few answers at this time. However, collectors of Honduras, do you have any Locomotive covers from Amampala? If so, could you let me have details preferably accompanied by a photocopy! Any extension or re-inforcement of the dates I have listed will be most welcome.

Brian Moorhouse, 76 Aubert Park, LONDON N5 1TS England.

21. NICARAGUA; Mr Maxwell says that he has some of the Centenary of Independence Issue (1921) and the Palace issue of 1929-31 overprinted as the first issue airs (Correo-Aereo 1929 P.A.A.) and seeks information about their status.

22. COSTA RICA; Mr Bryn Jones of Swansea says he has in his possession a copy of SG88 with overprint inverted. The whole overprint (SG type 56) is inverted, not just the stars. Any information, please?